

AMERICANISM
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▪ **PROGRAM GOALS**

- Safety In America - Disaster Preparedness
- Flags Across America
- Flag Education
- Promote Patriotism
- POW/MIA Recognition
- Smart/Maher National Citizenship Education Teacher Award

The definition of **"Americanism"** was originated by the Commander-in-Chief of the Grand Army of the Republic, United Spanish War Veterans, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, the National Commander of the American Legion and the Disabled American Veterans of the World War at a conference held in Washington, in February 1977.

"Americanism is an unflinching love of country; loyalty to its institutions and ideals; eagerness to defend it against all enemies; undivided allegiance to the flag; and a desire to secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and posterity."

Patriotic pride and the American spirit allows us to maintain true allegiance to the principles that created our great organization. As members of the Auxiliary to the VFW, we are obligated to teach our youth and educate the public about patriotism. We can be assured that everyone salutes the Flag and pays honor to this great country and our Military Heroes, past, present and future, as we share the sacrifices made by our veterans to preserve our freedoms.

Our specific goals this year will include, but not limited to the following major areas, and your reports will be judged on the following:

- **U.S. FLAG EDUCATION**
 - Number of American Flags Presented (at least 2" X 3" or larger)
 - Flag Education in schools
 - Recognition of Outstanding Flag Display
 - Flag Retirement Ceremonies
- **PROMOTE PATRIOTISM**
 - Celebrating Patriotic Holidays

- **POW/MIA RECOGNITION**
- **SMART/MAHER NATIONAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION TEACHER AWARD**

U.S. Flag Education

Respect of the flag on how to properly handle and care for the flag exhibits Americanism and demonstrates true Patriotism. The VFW Auxiliary can ensure that Flag Etiquette is distributed and taught to the nation. Flag Etiquette also teaches proper conduct when the flag is present. Flag etiquette information, U.S Flag Code and the history of the flag can be found at www.vfw.org/community/flag-etiquette.

Educate the Community and our youth on Flag education in schools, community activities and patriotic holidays. Volunteer in schools and teach our youth the importance of respecting the flag. For more information: www.vfwauxiliary.org

Recognize an Outstanding Flag Display. When community members take the time to show Patriotism by displaying the U.S. flag, honor them with a token of appreciation, such as a certificate from your Auxiliary.

Flag retirement ceremonies are a great way to involve the family of VFW and VFW Auxiliary members or serve as an event for the community. Flag retirement ceremonies honor our flag and serves as a great form of respect for our country.

Promote Patriotism

Celebrate the Patriotic Holidays throughout the year and involve the family and community in fun events, parade and youth activities which is an excellent way to educate and encourage prospective members to join. Celebrating Patriotic holidays give Auxiliaries ways to promote Patriotism to honor and celebrate our veterans, their families and active duty.

Patriotic Holidays

Loyalty Day – May 1st

Armed Forces Day –3rd Saturday in May

Flag Day – June 14

Independence Day – July 4

Patriot Day – September 11

POW/MIA Recognition Day – 3rd Friday in September (Missing Man Table Ceremony)

Gold Star Mother's and Family Day – Last Sunday in September

Veteran's Day – November 11

Pearl Harbor Day – December 7

POW/MIA RECOGNITION CEREMONY

Upon entering many VFW Posts, members see a single table set appropriately for a meal but is never used. This special "Missing Man Table" scene honors those who cannot join us - Prisoners of War or those missing in action. Please reflect when you pass this table and remember those who it is set for.

We honor and remember our missing the 3rd Friday in September designated National POW/MIA Recognition Day. I encourage you to have a recognition ceremony and include "The Missing Man Table".

Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher Award

Annually the VFW honors teachers from the top elementary, middle school and high school classrooms. Those teachers that promote Patriotism by teaching citizenship education, teaching America's history, including traditions, are perfect candidates for the award.

How the contest works is VFW Posts and Auxiliaries will recognize one (1) outstanding teacher from grades K-5, 6-8 and 9-12. Posts will submit winning entry to their District for judging, the District winners are sent to Department and then sent to VFW National Headquarters for the National Contest. For more information, visit www.vfw.org/community/youth-and-education

RESOURCES

- National Home Hotline 1-800-313-4200
- VFW & Auxiliary Members are a great resource
- VFW Website www.vfw.org
- Auxiliary Website www.vfwauxiliary.org
- State Website: www.vfwauxca.org
- www.vfwstore.org
- Veterans Crisis Hotline 1-800-273-8255 Press 1; www.VeteransCrisisLine.net
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org
- Department of Veterans Affairs Mental Health www.mentalhealth.va.gov
- Domestic Violence Prevention Enhancement and Leadership Through Alliances (DELTA)
- www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/delta/index.html

"360 Degrees For Our Veterans & Their Families"

"BELIEVE – We Can Do It!"

AWARDS

Legacy Awards are the awards that honor our Past Department Presidents. At the 2019 Department Convention, I will present the awards to the one **Auxiliary** Chairman who best promotes the named award in the 2018/2019 Auxiliary year.

- In honor of Past State President Renee Fulk for Outstanding Work - Americanism Program
- In honor of Past State President Kathy Walery for Outstanding Wrk – POW/MIA Program
- In honor of Past State President Erma “Tootsie” Dougherty for Outstanding Work – Loyalty Day Program
- A citation will be given to each **Auxiliary** in the Department that conducts a POW/MIA ceremony. This is to include the Missing Man Table. Reports need to be received to me **no later than October 15th** in order for the Auxiliary to receive the citation.
- A citation to each **Division** winner for the Best Promotion of Flag Education in the Classroom.
- A citation to each **Division** winner for the Best Flag Retirement Ceremony.
- A citation to each **Division** winner for the Best Public Education on the Bataan Death March in communities and in schools. (Elementary, high school and college)
- An award to the most Outstanding **District** and **Auxiliary** Chairman for the promotion of Americanism.



As a Patriotic Instructor, it is our responsibility to promote, teach and foster **Patriotism**. All members should make themselves familiar with Flag etiquette and review Auxiliary Traditions. The Patriotic Instructor provides instruction on how to promote patriotism among members and the community. Patriotic Instructors should ensure that the auxiliary room, during meetings, is keeping in line with the Ritual. Auxiliaries should participate in all Patriotic Holidays and ceremonies. Auxiliaries should be participating in schools, teaching our youth about patriotism and how to promote it. The Patriotic Instructor will teach auxiliary members proper auxiliary protocol, auxiliary traditions and flag etiquette, as well as Patriotic Holidays to observe. Patriotic Instructors ensure all are knowledgeable about **Americanism** and promotion of **Patriotism**.

PATRIOTIC HOLIDAYS

- **Patriot Day - September 11:** Patriot Day is a day to honor the memory of those who lost their lives in the attack on America this date in 2001.
- **National POW/MIA Recognition Day:** Is observed on the 3rd Friday in September each year. Educate members and the community by talking about the brave men and women; perform Missing Man Table Ceremonies.
- **Veterans Day, November 11:** Veterans Day (originally called Armistice Day) is the day we honor those living veterans who served this country.
- **Pearl Harbor Day, December 7:** A day to remember and honor all those who died in the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor on this day in 1941
- **Loyalty Day, May 1:** Is the day we show our devotion to our country and our flag
- **Memorial Day, May 30:** The day we honor all those men and women who gave the ultimate sacrifice for our country and our freedom
- **Flag Day, June 14:** The day we celebrate the anniversary of the adoption of the "Stars and Stripes" as our official National Flag
- **Independence Day, July 4:** The day we celebrate our adoption of the Declaration of Independence and the birth of democracy

UNDERSTANDING AUXILIARY TRADITIONS WELCOME!

This guide is to help you learn about our Ritual and the unique things we do at our meetings. Be sure to ask a fellow member if you have any questions!

- Entering a Meeting - at a local Auxiliary meeting, you will enter the meeting room and once the doors are closed, all members must show a current dues card.
- At Department and National meetings, your card will be asked for at the door.

RAPS OF THE GAVEL

- ✓ One rap 1 = **Attention**
- ✓ Two raps = **Rise**
- ✓ Three raps = **Be seated**

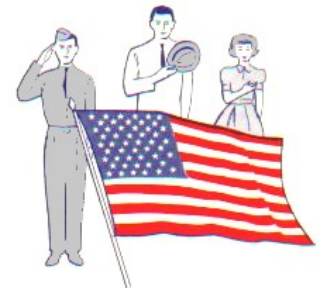


Attention and Parade Rest

- “**Attention**” in the VFW Auxiliary means hands at side, head up with eyes looking straight forward.
- “**Parade Rest**” means the left foot is moved slightly to the side while bringing the arms to the small of the back. Clasp the left thumb in the right hand. The head is bowed slightly during prayer.

Showing Proper Respect to the Flag

- During our Ritualistic meeting, the President will say “Salute” when the flags enter and leave the room, as well as when we say the Pledge of Allegiance and sing the national anthem. Salute the Flag by placing the palm of the right hand flat over the heart.
- During Auxiliary meetings, the heart salute shall be used always where the salute is used.
- A member who is also a veteran may use the military salute.
- When the Flag is displayed AND the national anthem is played and/or sung, all present should face the Flag and salute.
- When the Flag is NOT displayed and the national anthem is played and/or sung, all present should face the music and salute.
- Members should stand when the flags are moving.



Showing Proper Respect for the Altar and Bible

- Members will remain seated while the Chaplain opens and closes the Bible, provided the Colors are not at the Altar.
- Whenever the Chaplain is opening and closing the Bible, everyone should stop all movement and talking.
- Members will not cross between the President's station and the Altar, as this is considered sacred ground symbolizing where our Comrades who have answered the final roll call are at rest. However, when the Bible is closed, members may pass through this area.

Addressing the President and Making a Motion

- All remarks must be addressed to the President and not by one member to another. A member wishing to address the President will rise and say, "Mister/Madam President," but shall not speak further until he or she has been recognized by the President.
- Making motions is your right as a member. To make a motion, you should stand and be recognized by the President and then proceed.

Other Traditions

- The Color Bearers' Flags shall be held at attention with the right hand above on the flagstaff, left hand on a level with the right elbow with left arm across the waist.
- The Color Bearers carrying the flags do not sing or recite the Pledge to the Flag. They always place the Flags in stands before sitting down. Stands must be placed at the right of the Color Bearer's chairs.
- When Officers (including Color Bearers, Flag Bearer and Banner Bearer vacate their stations, but remain in the room), the chair **does not have to be filled** by another member.
- When the Chaplain opens, and closes the Bible, the members should **STOP** all movement and talking and remain seated or stationery during the time.
- An Auxiliary may offer to hold Memorial Services for a deceased member by contacting the family without waiting for a request from the family. Any part of the service that may conflict with any religious belief may be omitted or changed.
- Officers should not read aloud the notes in the lightface type.

- The Patriotic Instructor's Flag shall be placed on the floor level always to the **RIGHT** of the presiding Officer, between the President's and Secretary's stations.
- On entering the meeting room after the Auxiliary is in session, members will show their membership card to the Guard and proceed directly to a seat. The Guard never leaves his/her position at the door while the Auxiliary is in session, unless relieved by someone appointed by the presiding Officer to fill his/her station.
- All remarks must be addressed to the President and not by one member to another. A member, wishing to address the President, will rise and say "**Mister/Madam President**" but shall speak further until he/she has been recognized by the President.
- Making motions is your right as a member. To make a motion, you should stand and be recognized, then proceed with "**I move...**"; **not** "I make a motion".
- When the Secretary calls the rolls, the Officers will stand when their name is called and remain standing until roll call is completed.
- The POW/MIA flag may be posted prior to the meeting. If posted, this flag is placed to the immediate left of the Banner. The President may ask someone to bring in the POW/MIA flag before the opening ceremonies take place. If this is done all should rise.

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